



Cannabis, Arizona, Fire, Golf and Google

Posted by **Pierluigi Oliverio** on Monday, June 14, 2010

Monday: Medical Cannabis Outreach Meeting

The first outreach meeting regarding medical cannabis collectives was held Monday night at City Hall. Even though the meeting was held late in the process, it was well attended with over 150 people. There were two main groups present: residents and collective patients. Not one person spoke against compassionate use of medical marijuana in San Jose, however, both groups agreed that the locations should be away from schools, parks, daycare centers, etc. Last October, when I initially brought this issue to the Rules Committee, I advocated that we restrict where collectives can locate and include setbacks from locations like schools, etc.

A gentleman in a wheelchair brought up the point that attorneys' offices are located next to houses and schools in San Jose and that those attorneys have clients who visit their offices that may be violent criminals, so how come we don't regulate where attorneys can locate?

City staff proposed a "lottery system" to award a permit for collectives. Not one of the 150 people present supported this idea. Some shared that a lottery system is ludicrous because it sets up an irresponsible process to possibly award collectives that do not follow state law and may not have solid responsible procedures in place.

Tuesday: City Council Meeting

The longest agenda item was the issue about boycotting Arizona because of their illegal immigration law. After several hours of discussion, and testimony, I voted no. I did not make extended comments because I did not think that this matter should have been on the Council agenda. On any given day the other 49 states could pass a law that I/you/we may not agree with. As a city, we do not have the bandwidth to meddle in what other states feel is right for them. This is why we choose where we live. [I wrote a blog related to this topic more than two years ago stating my views that you may read here.](#)

Wednesday: Closing of Fire Station Council Policy

I met with the fire chief on the last-minute proposal to close Fire

House 7 in this year's budget. I met with city management a few months ago and asked the question "Did the managers budget include closing any fire houses?" The response back was "no." They shared, instead, that they were going to move forward with "dynamic deployment," which would include moving and eliminating fire engines from stations that have two vehicles. I was told that the chief, assistant chief and a member of the city manager's office would have a follow-up meeting with me. We did and again I was told that no fire house was going to be closed.

Then, on May 28, a management budget memo (MBA#39) came out that said that an elimination of an engine was going to occur. Actually, it's the closure of Fire House 7. No one from the management office nor the fire department had the gumption to call me; thus my request for an additional meeting.

This budget memo violates the city-wide policy on fire station closures which Mayor Reed, Vice Mayor Chirco and I championed two years ago. The Council policy states that changing the make-up of a fire house—whether it be consolidation, closure or relocation—requires a policy discussion prior to being a budget discussion, and must be accompanied by a community outreach process.

The policy focuses on using data as the basis for changing the structure of our fire houses and ensures that the community in the affected service is notified and part of the process instead of being told after the fact. Closing of fire stations based on data and outreach may occur next fiscal year but not this fiscal year. [I wrote about this policy back in September 2008.](#)

Thursday: Neighborhood Services Committee Meeting

We discussed selling the city subsidized Rancho del Pueblo nine-hole golf course. I suggested we sell the entire 30-acre parcel to create a housing/retail village and create 1-2 soccer fields for open space as well. I believe there is higher demand for soccer fields than golf. We would take the money from the land sale and pay off the mortgage for Rancho del Pueblo 100 percent and pay down the mortgage on Los Lagos Golf course by approximately \$12 million based on medium density housing. The more density we allow the more money and open space we can get.

Friday: San Jose Municipal Rose Garden

More than 200 Google volunteers came out to paint, mulch, fertilize, rake and deadhead at the Historic Rose Garden Municipal Park. In 2007, I pushed for a policy that would allow volunteers from private companies to work in our parks when their respective companies have

a community service day. I remember asking again and again for the council to allow this change and the persistence paid off. None of the Google employees were interested in switching careers but they thought the park was a real gem. [I wrote about this policy change 2.5 years ago.](#)

[Please vote for our San Jose Rose Garden Park to be considered America's Best Rose Garden.](#)

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